

Serial No. 10/615,071 – Rettig
Art Unit: 3682 – Attorney Docket 52.061
Response to Office Action dated September 2, 2005
and to Advisory Action dated December 29, 2005
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In the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph on page 5, beginning at line 6, with the following:

In order to control the pivoting of the steer tube 30 and wheel with regard to the frame 30 20, the steer tube 30 is connected to a handlebar assembly 38 opposite the wheel fork 32. The handlebar assembly 38 includes a handlebar (not shown) that is fixed to the steer tube 30 for rotation therewith by a stem 42. The stem 42 includes a first end 44 that is securable around the handlebar, and a second end 46 having a first portion 47 and a second portion 48 secured to one another around the tube 30 above the sleeve 28 to attach the stem 42 to the tube 30. The first portion 47 and second portion 48 include alignable openings 49 and 50 that each receive a bolt 52 therein in order to releasably fix the second end 46 of the stem 42 to the steer tube 30.

Please replace the paragraph on page 5, beginning at line 21, with the following:

The first spacer 56 is formed of pair of rings 60 and 60', and second spacer 58 is formed of a pair of rings 60'' and 60'''. The pair of rings 60 and 60' and the pair of rings 60'' and 60''' are each positioned in an inverted relationship with regard to one another on opposite sides of the stem 42 to form the spacers 56 and 58, respectively. Each ring 60, 60', 60'' and 60''' is formed of a generally rigid material, such as an injection molded plastic, or metal, and includes a generally circular base 62 and a number of tabs 64 extending outwardly from one side of the base 62. Each of the tabs 64 extends outwardly from the base 62 along or in conformance with the shape of the base 62 such that the tabs 64 do not obscure or narrow the diameter of a central opening 66, 66' defined by the base 62. Similarly, tabs 64' extend outwardly from the base 62' of ring 60', tabs 64'' extend outwardly from the base 62'' of ring 60'', and tabs 64''' extend outwardly from the base 62''' of ring 60'''. Further, while the base 62 is generally circular in shape in order to conform to the shape of the steer tube 30, based on other possible configurations for the steer tube 30, such as a rectangular or

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other polygonal shape, the rings 60, 60', 60'' and 60''' and base 62 can be formed as necessary to conform to the various shapes for a steer tube 30.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 3, page 6 with the following:

Looking particularly at Fig. 5, each of the tabs 64 has a wide end 68 and a narrow end 70 that both extend outwardly perpendicularly from the base 62 and are joined by a downwardly sloping surface 72. Similarly, rings 60', 60'' and 60''' included tabs 64', 64'' and 64''' having wide ends 68', 68'' 68''' and narrow ends 70', 70'' 70''', respectively.

Further, the tabs 64 are positioned around the base 62 such that the narrow end 70 of each tab 64 is positioned immediately adjacent, and/or forms a part of the wide end 68 of an adjacent tab 64. While this is a preferred embodiment for the rings 60, 60', 60'' and 60''', each of the tabs 64 can also be spaced from one another about the periphery of the base 62 in order to form rings 60, 60', 60'' and 60''' having tabs 64 of various sizes and configurations to provide the desired range of adjustment for the assembly 54.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 11, page 6 with the following:

In order to enable the pair of rings 60 and 60' forming the first spacer 56 and the pair of rings 60'' and 60''' forming the second spacer 58 to lockingly engage one another, each sloping surface 72 and 72' also includes a number of locking members 74 spaced along the length of the surface 72. In a preferred embodiment shown in Fig. 5, the locking members 74 take the form of rounded teeth 76, 76', 76'' separated by complementary grooves 78, 78', 78''' forming a descending, step-like configuration along the length of the sloping surface 72. Further, while the teeth 76 and grooves 78 are shown as being generally rectangular in shape and having rounded engaging ends 79 and 80, 80' respectively, the shape of the teeth 76 and grooves 78 can be any desired shape that is capable of securely

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engaging a complementary shaped tooth or groove on the adjacent ring 60, 60', 60'' and 60''' to prevent the rotation of the rings 60 with respect to ring 60', or to prevent rotation of ring 60'' with respect to ring 60'''. The teeth 76 and grooves 78 are spaced along the entire length of the sloping surface 72 such that the respective rings 60, 60', 60'' and 60''' forming each spacer 56 and 58 can be engaged with one another at a number of different locations along the entire length of the surface 72 of each tab 64, enabling the rings 60, 60', 60'' and 60''' to be engaged with one another. As as shown best in Fig. 2, the width (w) of the assembled rings 60 and 60' forming the first spacer 56, and similarly the width of the assembled rings 60'' and 60''' forming the second spacer 58, can be selected between the completely collapsed position of the first spacer 56 to an extended position of the second spacer 58. Thus, the stem 42 can be positioned between the spacers 56 and 58 at different heights based upon the various configurations for the rings 60 and 60' of spacer 56, or rings 60'' and 60''' of spacer 58, from the completely collapsed position to the completely expanded position.